

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 L-03
NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 SOE-02 DODE-00 DOE-15
SS-15 SP-02 CEQ-01 PM-05 PA-01 NEAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 DOEE-00 H-01 /112 W
-----127004 261730Z /64

O R 261226Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1839
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH, IN, US
SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTING OF MAY 24 SFRC HEARINGS ON TARAPUR
SHIPMENT

REF: A. STATE 130536 B. NEW DELHI 8225

1. THE DELHI PRESS ON MAY 26 TREATED THE MAY 24 SFRC HEARINGS
ON THE TARAPUR NUCLEAR SHIPMENT IN A MORE LOW-KEY AND LESS DETAILED
MANNER THAN WAS THE CASE WITH THE HIRC HEARINGS OF MAY 23 (REFTEL
B). THE "INDIAN EXPRESS", "TIMES OF INDIA" AND "PATRIOT"
CARRIED THEIR ACCOUNTS ON INSIDE PAGES, AND OF THOSE PAPERS
WHICH CARRIED THE STORY ON THE FRONT PAGE ONLY THE "HINDUSTAN
TIMES". ACCOUNT HAS A MAJOR HEADLINE. THE "NATIONAL HERALD"
AND "PATRIOT" ARTICLES ARE RELATIVELY BRIEF AND ARE BASED ON
A REUTERS DISPATCH. THE "TIMES OF INDIA" REPORTS THE STORY AS
A PTI DISPATCH, RATHER THAN AS AN ACCOUNT BY ITS WASHINGTON CORRES-
PONDENT.

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2. HEADLINES GENERALLY EMPHASIZED THE TESTIMONY BY DR. NYE
AND SEN. MCCLURE URGING THAT THE SHIPMENT BE RELEASED.
TYPICAL HEADLINES ARE: "US SENATOR ASSAILS NRC POLICY" ("INDIAN
EXPRESS"), "CALL FOR EARLY SUPPLY OF US URANIUM TO INDIA"
("TIMES OF INDIA), "PLEA TO STEP UP N-FUEL CLEARANCE" ("PATRIOT").
THE WARREN UNNA PIECE ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE "STATESMAN" READ
"SENATE UNLIKELY TO BLOCK TARAPUR SHIPMENT," WHILE THE N.C.

MENON DISPATCH IN THE "HINDUSTAN TIMES" WAS TITLED "SENATORS DIVIDED OVER NUCLEAR FUEL FOR TARAPUR UNIT".

3. THE LEAD PARAGRAPHS OF ALMOST ALL THE ACCOUNTS HIGHLIGHT SEN. MCCLURE'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE. THE PTI AND REUTERS DISPATCHES QUOTE SEN. MCCLURE AS SAYING THAT "THE NRC SHOULD HAVE APPROVED THE TARAPUR EXPORT UNDER THE CLEAR MANDATES IN THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION ACT" AND "THE SENATE MUST ACT WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED TO MINIMIZE ANY FURTHER DAMAGE TO THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH INDIA". THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" QUOTES SEN. MCCLURE AS SAYING THAT THE CONGRESS WAS BEING DRAWN INTO "A WHOLLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND PRMATURE DEBATE" ON THE INDIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM. THE "STATESMAN" CITES THE SENATOR AS ALSO CRITICIZING THE NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION ACT FOR PRODUCING A "CONTINUING SERIES OF CONFRONTATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES" NOT ONLY WITH INDIA, BUT ALSO WITH JAPAN, BRITAIN AND THE EC COUNTRIES.

4. MOST OF THE PRESS ACCOUNTS REPORT SEN. GLENN'S OPENING STATEMENT FACTUALLY. THE REPORTS REFER TO HIS STATEMENT THAT THE "ROOT OF UNCERTAINTIES---ARE THE SUSPICIONS GENERATED" BY INDIA'S 1974 NUCLEAR TEST. THE PAPERS ALSO REPORT SEN. GLENN AS SAYING THAT PM DESAI'S ASSURANCES REGARDING HIS OPPOSITION TO FURTHER NUCLEAR TESTS AND DEVELOPING NUCLEAR WEAPONS HAD "DONE MUCH TO ALLAY CONCERNS IN THIS REGARD". ACCORDING TO THE "STATESMAN", SEN. GLENN SAID THAT THESE ASSURANCES TAKEN WITH "THE LACK OF EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSIVE-RELATED ACTIVITIES INDICATE THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INDIA HAS TAKEN A MAJOR POSITIVE STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF OUR NON-PROLIFERATION GOALS. TO MY VIEW, THIS IS A MOST SIGNIFICANT AND COMMENDABLE STEP". MOST OF THE OTHER PAPERS QUOTE HIM AS ADDING, HOWEVER, THAT "THESE ASSURANCES DO NOT UNAMBIGUOUSLY RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT INDIA IS CONTINUING WITH A SO-CALLED PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES PROGRAM". PTI AND THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" MENTIONED SEN. GLENN'S REMARK THAT HE AND SEN. PERCY HAD WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT CARTER TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN OVER INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN ASSURED BY SECRETARY VANCE THAT THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT INDIA WAS ENGAGED IN ANY EXPLOSIVE RELATED ACTIVITIES.

5. DR. NYE'S TESTIMONY AND RESPONSES TO SEN. GLENN'S QUESTIONS RECEIVED GOOD COVERAGE, BUT WERE NOT AS PROMINENTLY FEATURED AS DURING HIS APPEARANCE BEFORE THE HOUSE IRC. HE WAS GENERALLY CREDITED WITH MAKING A "STRONG" ARGUMENT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION THAT ANY DELAY IN THE TARAPUR SHIPMENT WOULD BE SERIOUSLY PROJUDICIAL TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF US NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES. FOR INSTANCE, N.C. MENON WROTE THAT NYE "MADE ANOTHER ABLE PRESENTATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S CASE FOR APPROVAL OF THE TARAPUR SHIPMENT". ACCORDING TO MENON, NYE RESPONDED TO ONE OF SEN. GLENN'S QUESTIONS BY SAYING THAT THE CHANCES OF AGREEMENT

WITH INDIA ON FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS WERE IMPORTANT ENOUGH "FOR US TO SEND THE FUEL, TO ENSURE THAT THE POSSIBILITIES OF AGREEMENT DO NOT BECOME ZERO". THE PTI ACCOUNT (CARRIED IN THE "TIMES OF INDIA") STATES: "ASKED WHETHER HE BELIEVED THAT INDIA WOULD ACCEPT FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS, MR. NYE RECALLED MR. DESAI'S STATEMENTS AND SAID: 'IF WE ACHIEVE A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY (IN THE COMING MONTHS), WILL IT NOT CHANGE THE ATMOSPHERE SIGNIFICANTLY?' HE SAID MR. DESAI'S CONCERN REGARDING VERTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROLIFERATION ALSO COINCIDED WITH THE U.S. AIMS".

6. ONLY THREE PAPERS ("HINDUSTAN TIMES", "INDIAN EXPRESS" AND THE PTI REPORT IN THE "TIMES") MENTION SEN. GLENN'S

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 L-03
NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 SOE-02 DODE-00 DOE-15
SS-15 SP-02 CEQ-01 PM-05 PA-01 NEAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 DOEE-00 H-01 /112 W
-----127202 261731Z /64

O R 261226Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1840
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
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QUESTION ON AN INDIAN BREACH OF FAITH REGARDING USE OF US-SUPPLIED HEAVY WATER. ACCORDING TO THE "EXPRESS" VERSION, NYE STATED HE BELIEVED THAT SOME OF THE US-SUPPLIED HEAVY WATER WAS USED TO PRODUCE THE PLUTONIUM FOR THE 1974 TEST, BUT ADDED THAT THE 1956 AGREEMENT WAS LOOSELY WRITTEN AND THUS OPEN TO DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS. THE PTI REPORT ADDS THAT NYE TOLD SEN. GLENN THAT CARE WAS BEING TAKEN IN DRAFTING NEW AGREEMENTS AND THUS THERE WAS EVERY POSSIBILITY THAT THE DESAI GOVT AND ITS SUCCESSOR GOVTS WOULD ABIDE BY THEM.

7. THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" ACCOUNT REFERS OBLIQUELY TO NYE'S RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS REGARDING INDIAN REPROCESSING

OF SPENT FUEL RODS, A SUBJECT COVERED IN THOMAS O'TOOLE'S ACCOUNT OF THE NYE SENATE TESTIMONY IN THE MAY 25 "WASHINGTON POST" (AND CONTAINED IN TODAY'S WIRELESS FILE)). NO OTHER PAPERS REFER TO THIS ASPECT OF THE HEARINGS. HOWEVER, THE "TIMES OF INDIA" CARRIES A SEPARATE FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE BY ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, M.V. KAMATH, WHICH IS HEADLINED "THIRD PLUTONIUM REPROCESSING PLANT LIKELY". THE KAMATH PIECE APPEARS TO BE LIFTED ALMOST VER-

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BATIM FROM THE O'TOOLE ARTICLE IN THE "POST," BUT KAMATH CHARACTERISTICALLY ADDS HIS OWN EDITORIAL BITE WITH AN ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPH QUESTIONING THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF SAFEGUARDS: "THERE IS NO EXPLANATION AS TO WHAT IS BEING GUARDED AGAINST WHOM. NO WESTERN REACTOR IS 'SAFEGUARDED' IN THE SENSE THAT INDIAN PLANTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE".

8. TESTIMONY BY THOMAS STOEL AND PAUL LEVENTHAL BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE RECEIVED ONLY MARGINAL COVERAGE IN THE PRESS. SEVERAL PAPERS, SUCH AS THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" AND "NATIONAL HERALD" DID NOT EVEN MENTION THIS TESTIMONY. SIMILARLY, THE TESTIMONY OF THE NRC COMMISSIONERS WAS VIRTUALLY IGNORED BY THE INDIAN PRESS ACCOUNTS. ONLY WARREN UNNA OFFERED ANY SUBSTANTIVE REPORTING ON THEIR REMARKS. ACCORDING TO UNNA, THE FOUR COMMISSIONERS NEVER ADDRESSED THE TARAPUR ISSUE ITSELF BUT WERE MORE INVOLVED IN ARGUMENTS AS TO WHETHER THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN SUMMONED TO THE HEARINGS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

9. THERE WAS RELATIVELY LITTLE SPECULATION ABOUT FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS. N.C. MENON WROTE THAT "IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT THE FINAL CONGRESSIONAL DECISION, BUT IT APPEARS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT MR. DESAI WILL BE SUBJECTED TO CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE DURING HIS VISIT TO MAKE MORE CONCESSIONS TO ALLAY CONGRESSIONAL APPREHENSIONS". HOWEVER, UNNA BELIEVED THAT UNLESS A SENATOR INTRODUCES A RESOLUTION IN THE SENATE TO BLOCK THE TARAPUR SHIPMENT, THE DELIVERY WILL GO THROUGH, SINCE BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS MUST PASS SUCH RESOLUTIONS.10. SEVERAL PAPERS ON MAY 26 CARRIED EDITORIALS SPARKED BY THE HOUSE IRC HEARINGS. THE ONE IN THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" RESTATED THE FAMILIAR INDIAN POSITION THAT THE U.S. HAS A CLEAR CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION TO SUPPLY FUEL TO TARAPUR. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT THE TESTIMONY BY DR. NYE AND THE "FRANK AND OUTSPOKEN" LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR GOHEEN TO SEVERAL CONGRESSMEN "CLEARLY REPRESENT U.S. RECOGNITION OF THE STRENGTH

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OF INDIAN FEELINGS ON THE ISSUE. BOTH OF THEM MAKE THE POINT THAT IF EVENTUAL ACCEPTANCE OF SULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS IS THE OB-

JECTIVE OF U.S. POLICY, PUTTING PRESSURE ON INDIA TO DO SO IS THE WORST WAY OF ACHIEVING IT". AN EDITORIAL IN TODAY'S "TRIBUNE" FROM CHANDIGARH SIMILARLY COMMENDS DR. NYE AND AMBASSADOR GOHEEN FOR SHOWING A "BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF INDIA'S STAND ON URANIM SUPPLIES". THAN MANY "ILL-INFORMED AND PREJUDICED" MEMBERS OF THE U.S. CONGRESS. THE "TRIBUNE" WARNS THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO "PRESSURIZE" PRIME MINISTER DESAI WILL BE "FUTILE". AN EDITORIAL IN THE MAY 26 "HINDUSTAN," A HINDI LANGUAGE DAILY IN DELHI, STATES THAT IF THE U.S. RENEGES ON ITS PLEDGE TO SUPPLY FUEL FOR TARAPUR, INDIA WOULD BE FREE TO REPROCESS THE SPENT FUEL. THE LEAD EDITORIAL IN THE MAY 26 "TIMES OF INDIA", ENTITLED "AN INVITATION TO SURRENDER", IS PREDICTABLY UNFRIENDLY. THE SNIDE THRUST OF THE EDITORIAL, WHICH IS BEING REPEATED IN FULL BY USINFO, IS THAT INDIA SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO AMBASSADOR GOHEEN FOR HAVING WRITTEN TO THE CONGRESSMEN SINCE HIS LETTER EXPOSES "WASHINGTON'S STRATEGY FOR EXTRACTING CONCESSIONS FROM THIS COUNTRY". ACCORDING TO THE "TIMES", THIS STRATEGY IS TO REQUEST THE CONGRESS TO GIVE THE ADMINISTRATION A FREE HAND SO THAT IT CAN "CONVINCE THOSE IN AUTHORITY IN NEW DELHI THAT THEY SHOULD SURRENDER IN SUBSTANCE IF NOT IN FORM".

11. ON ANOTHER FRONT, THE MAY 26 DELHI PAPERS REPORT THAT MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SAMARENDRA KUNDU TOLD THE PRESS IN CALCUTTA MAY 25 THAT THE GOI IS HOPEFUL THAT THE U.S. WILL FULFILL ITS COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY THE 7.6 TONS OF FUEL TO TARAPUR. KUNDU REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN ASSURED BY AMBASSADOR PALKHIWALA DURING A STOPOVER IN NEW YORK THAT THE "SUPPLY WILL GET THROUGH".
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 26 may 1978
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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